

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-20, 22-26 and 29-37 are pending in the present application. Claims 21, 27, 28 and 38 are canceled without prejudice; and Claims 18, 22, 23, 29, 30, 36 and 37 are amended by the present amendment.

Amendments to the claims find support at least in the originally filed claims. Thus, no new matter is added. Further, claims are amended to be in condition for allowance by incorporating dependent claim features, as discussed below. Hence, it is respectfully submitted that no new issues are raised by the amendments and therefore the amendments should be entered without need for further consideration.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 18, 28 and 36-38 were objected to; Claims 18-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,959,302 to Charpak; Claims 27 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Charpak in view of Jeavons et al. (herein “Jeavons”); Claim 29 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Charpak in view of Jeavons and U.S. Patent No. 5,633,501 to Amleshi et al. (herein “Amleshi”); Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Charpak in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,476,390 to Hanawa; Claim 32 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Charpak in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,816,683 to Marsden; Claims 33 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Charpak in view of Marsden and Jeavons; Claim 34 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Charpak in view of Marsden and U.S. Patent No. 4,427,870 to Inoue; and Claim 28 was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Initially, Applicants and Applicants' representative thank Examiner Lee for the courtesy of a personal interview with Applicants' representative on September 1, 2004. During the interview, objections and rejections in outstanding Office Action were discussed. In particular, amendments to place the claims in condition for allowance and to overcome outstanding objections were discussed as reiterated herein.

Further, Applicants gratefully acknowledge Examiner Lee's indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 28. Thus, Claim 18, the base claim of Claim 28, is amended to recite all the limitations of allowable Claim 28 and of intervening Claims 21 and 27, which are accordingly canceled, and to remove limitations added in the amendment filed April 30, 2004. Further, Claims 22, 23, 29 and 30 are amended to properly depend from non-canceled claims, and Claims 18, 36 and 37 are amended to overcome objections, in light of suggestions in the outstanding Office Action.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claim 18, 36 and 37, and claims depending therefrom, are allowable. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments only combine features from existing claims and make changes suggested by the Examiner, therefore, no new issues are raised and the amendments should be entered without need for further consideration, as discussed during the interview.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present amendment is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Michael R. Casey

Attorney of Record
Registration No. 40,294
Zachary S. Stern
Registration No. 54,719

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220

I:\ATTY\ZS\21's\212\212701US\212701US-AM.083004.DOC